

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COAL RESIDUALS REUSE AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2218) to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment, with Mr. Bishop of Utah in the chair.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I oppose H.R. 2218, the so-called Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act. There are many problems with this legislation. It ignores the significant public health concerns around coal ash, which includes potent toxins such as mercury, lead, and sulfur. It does nothing to ensure the safe disposal of coal ash, and in fact allows a state-by-state race to the bottom. Finally, it preempts citizens from taking legal action to protect themselves in situations where public health is endangered.

I am particularly troubled by the fact that this legislation significantly restructures environmental regulatory authority by stripping the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, of its ability to enforce any regulations around coal ash disposal. Protecting public health is part of what the EPA was created to do and we must give them the tools to be able fulfill their mission. I strongly oppose this legislation.

HONORING DETECTIVE SCOTT A. GALESKI

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 26, 2013

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Detective Scott A. Galeski of Wyandotte, Michigan, who was awarded the 2013 Presidential Volunteer Service Award for more than 4,000 hours of volunteer service over his lifetime.

Detective Galeski has tirelessly and selflessly dedicated himself to teaching, training, and mentoring the community's youth, as well as exhibiting a great love for his public service as a member of the police force.

Detective Galeski's biggest impact has been through his direct efforts guiding and shaping several generations of youth throughout the downriver communities. He has been a steadfast and selfless advocate of shaping and mentoring youth into what he calls "just good, solid kids" on occasions and hours too countless to measure accurately.

Detective Galeski elevated and added to his efforts with youth by founding the Downriver/

Detroit Police Cadet Program in 2008 while at the same time coaching high school athletics. The Cadet Program was established for youth interested in careers in law enforcement, and thanks to Detective Galeski's efforts, it became the largest program in the state, boasting a roster of over 73 cadets and having the highest ranking cadet (Major) in the nation. To date the program has produced seven sworn law enforcement officers in various agencies.

Detective Galeski, aside from his countless hours of service to his community and youth, also is known for counseling youth with difficult life circumstances and problems. Detective Galeski is a tremendous asset to the community, and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Detective Galeski on receiving the Presidential Volunteer Service Award, and for all of his efforts to make his community a better place.

OPPOSING H.R. 5, THE LETTING OUR STUDENTS DOWN ACT

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 26, 2013

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I stridently oppose H.R. 5, the Letting our Students Down Act. This partisan proposal to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act dismantles critical civil rights protections for our most vulnerable learners, dramatically undermines federal investment in education, directs taxpayer funds away from public schools to private entities, and restricts monies from the students who need it the most.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is a landmark civil rights bill given its purpose to ensure each and every child a quality education by closing achievement gaps due to poverty and inequity. Since 1965, we have learned that to fulfill this mission, we must ensure that schools and states have the resources available to meet their academic needs. We also have learned that there remains an important role for the federal government to encourage thoughtful accountability systems to help identify schools and districts needing assistance in educating all students. Accountability systems with clear performance targets serve as an essential tool for ensuring that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, language status, national origin, income, ZIP code or disability are taught at high levels. Unfortunately, the 2002 reauthorization also included overly prescriptive penalties and interventions that decreased standards, overburdened schools, and pushed classroom instruction to "teaching to the test." Thus, the challenge facing policymakers during reauthorization is balancing federal oversight and decision making at the state level without abdicating federal responsibility for safeguarding equal educational opportunity regardless of race, ethnicity, language, country of origin, income or ability.

H.R. 5 undermines critical federal investment in education and eschews the federal responsibility to encourage states to improve the education of all children under the guise of state flexibility. Rather than investing in education, the Republican plan exacerbates school funding shortfalls by locking in draconian spending cuts, removing over a billion dollars from our classrooms and students. To further ensure the dismantling of the federal investment in education, H.R. 5 prohibits Congress from appropriating any money above the excessively-low spending levels set and even bans increasing federal investment with inflation. In addition to enacting harsh reductions in spending at the federal level, H.R. 5 eviscerates education investment by removing the federal maintenance of effort provisions, thereby licensing states to reduce state education funding and redirect these funds to non-education activities.

Further, H.R. 5 undercuts federal accountability and taxpayer investment by eliminating requirements that schools or districts take action when failing to improve academic achievement or graduation rates. Specifically, the 2002 law required states and districts to examine and address the performance of vulnerable students, including at-risk, migrant, racial/ethnic minority, English Language Learner, and low-income students as well as students with disabilities. H.R. 5 removes the requirement for intervention, relinquishing the federal responsibility to ensure that states provide equal educational opportunity for our youngest citizens. The bill removes other safeguards for vulnerable students as well. For example, it removes the one percent cap on the use of alternative assessment scores for accountability purposes for students with significant cognitive disabilities, permitting schools to provide less rigorous curricula and assessments to an unlimited number of students with disabilities. This change is unnecessary, promotes lesser standards and assessments for students with disabilities, and incentivizes the over-identification of students with disabilities. Another illustration of weakened protections for vulnerable students is the lessening of funding and protections for homeless students. H.R. 5 reduces the McKinney-Vento authorization despite a 57 percent increase in homeless children since 2009. It strikes provisions improving access to educational services for homeless students championed by former Illinois Congresswoman Judy Biggert and included in prior Republican versions of this bill. H.R. 5 also eliminates critical supports for afterschool programs, STEM enrichment, physical education, the arts, music, as well as social and emotional programs that support positive behaviors.

Teachers, the dedicated stewards of our education system, are harmed by eliminating requirements for quality professional development, a critical component of advancing teacher content and pedagogical knowledge. Under this bill, proposed teacher evaluation systems are punitive, used to hire and fire rather than to encourage professional growth and improvement. H.R. 5 removes protections for

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